



Testimony of

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**President, Backus Federation of Nurses, AFT Local 5149**

Public Health Committee Public Hearing  
March 19, 2014

***SB 460 An Act Concerning Hospital Conversions and Other Matters Affecting Hospitals***

Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and members of the Public Health Committee. My name is John Brady and I am President of the Backus Federation of Nurses, a union representing Registered Nurses at Backus Hospital in Norwich. I am here to testify support of SB 460 An Act Concerning Hospital Conversions and Other Matters Affecting Hospitals.

I wish you could walk in my shoes for a day. To see the way nurses and other healthcare workers pour their hearts and souls into the care of their patients. How they cry with a family at the birth of their first born and hold the hand of an elderly woman as she breathes her last breath. They are there when the young father asks, "What do I do now?" after a young mother dies in a car crash or from cancer. They reach out to each other for hugs of support and then go home exhausted and hug their own children and spouse, fully understanding how precious life is and how important a role they play in it.

Being a nurse or other health care worker is not means to make a living. It is a way to live a life. A life dedicated to the service of others. I am passionate about the nurses I represent because I walk in their shoes. I hug and cry with my 20-something year old colleagues after they have worked for hours to resuscitate a newborn and have failed. I pray they have the strength to recover and continue in a vocation that is, for them and those like them, both more than they can handle and more than they can walk away from.

I am passionate about the care of our patients and passionate about the health of our community hospitals, because after 20 years in the emergency department, these are my patients and my community hospital.

There is nothing more essential to a nurse's ability to fulfill his or her mission than the ability to freely advocate for his or her patients. This bill would protect that ability to advocate by requiring any for-profit corporation to commit to maintaining certain staffing levels and collective bargaining requirements and this would protect our patients and our community hospitals.

Please help me help them. Please protect our patients and our community hospitals. Please support SB 460. Thank you and I am at your service to help in any way I can.